

20-545

The Secretary of State presents his compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of Mission and has the honor to remind all missions of the Department's expectation that sending States ensure their personnel maintain adequate health insurance coverage during their employment or assignment in the United States, and that their personnel possess financial resources sufficient to cover the costs of obtaining necessary healthcare services in the United States.

This note updates and replaces the Department's circular diplomatic note No. 13-117, dated November 21, 2013.

### **Expectation of Health Insurance Coverage**

The Department wishes to re-emphasize its requirement and expectation that foreign missions offer all of their employees the opportunity to enroll in adequate and affordable health insurance coverage. The Department further reminds foreign missions of its expectation that all individual foreign mission employees, whether local hires or foreign service personnel, to maintain basic health insurance coverage throughout the duration of their employment or assignment in the United States. Such insurance should be sufficient to cover routine health care

**DIPLOMATIC NOTE**

needs, as well as treatment for accidents and illness. For missions and individuals that do not already maintain adequate coverage, numerous companies offer specialized insurance plans which are designed to account for the cost of medical care in the United States; insurance brokers can provide advice on policies available to both employers and individuals, as well as their relative costs and benefits. Individuals who are unable to secure other coverage may also be eligible to purchase insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace; further information may be found at [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

### **Financial Responsibility**

The Department reminds foreign missions that healthcare facilities in the United States are largely owned and operated by the private sector, and that patients are responsible for costs not covered by insurance. It is incumbent upon sending States to ensure that all their members have sufficient financial resources to maintain appropriate insurance coverage, and to pay for other healthcare needs while in the United States.

### **Annual Reporting to OFM**

Effective immediately, the Department requests that all Chiefs of Mission provide an annual written assurance to the Office of Foreign Missions that all members of the mission and their relevant dependents have and will maintain basic health insurance coverage throughout the duration of their employment or assignment in the United States. Such assurance for calendar year 2020 shall be

provided no later than December 31, 2020, and on an annual basis thereafter.

Assurances may be sent electronically to OFM-Info@state.gov or by mail to:

2201 C Street, NW Room 2236

Washington, DC 20520

Questions concerning the above matters should be transmitted to OFM by electronic mail at OFM-Info@state.gov.

Department of State,

Washington, April 3, 2020.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'Q' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.